



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Issue 137 – December 11, 2006

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

With the announcement of six great college football teams coming to the Grand Canyon State for the Insight Bowl, Tostitos Fiesta Bowl and the Tostitos BCS National Championship Game, Arizona's tourism industry definitely stands to be one of the big winners. An incredible week of college football action will kick off on Dec. 29 when Texas Tech faces Minnesota in the Insight Bowl. The New Year will also start with a bang when undefeated Boise State and Minnesota meet on Jan. 1 in the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl. And, all eyes will be on Arizona as the first-ever BCS National Championship Game is played at the University of Phoenix Stadium on Jan. 8 between Ohio State and Florida. These are all teams that have dedicated fan bases that are known to travel and follow their favorite team to a bowl game. As a sponsor of all three events, AOT's goal is to encourage these visitors to extend their stay in the Grand Canyon State and explore more of what we have to offer. We encourage everyone around the state to give these visitors a warm Arizona welcome and show them the hospitality that has made us such an incredible destination.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Presents "Branding Arizona" Workshop Series

The Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) is proud to present complimentary workshops on "Branding Arizona" at a location near you. Each workshop will cover what a brand is; how AOT is branding Arizona; how the Arizona brand impacts your region; and how you

can leverage the Arizona brand to differentiate your products in the marketplace. For more information or to register please contact Sarah Martins at 602-364-3687 or via email at smartins@azot.gov. Workshops will be held in the following locations:

December 13th, 2006
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Arizona Historical Society
Board Room
1300 North College Avenue
Tempe, AZ 85281

December 20, 2006
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort and Spa
San Pedro 1
3800 West Starr Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 85745

AOT Posts 2006 3rd Quarter Newsletter

The 3rd Quarter Research Tourism Indicator Newsletter is now available on the Research section of www.azot.com. The newsletter contains 3rd quarter 2006 indicators for lodging, air passenger traffic, tourism related tax revenues, State and National Park visitation and visitor counts from Painted Cliffs Welcome Center. For more information, contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at (602) 364-3716 or melkins@azot.gov.

Kiva Couchon Joins AOT Staff

Kiva Couchon has joined the AOT team as the new Communications Manager. Before joining the AOT staff, Kiva was the Communications Manager for Ottawa University. She has an extensive writing, editing and public relations background ranging from education to healthcare. Kiva holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from Northern Arizona University. In her new position she will manage AOT's communications pieces such as AOT in Action and Crossroads. She will also provide public relations efforts to the media and agency constituency with information on AOT and its programs. Kiva can be reached at kcouchon@azot.gov or 602-364-3724.

Requesting Calendar of Event Information

The Arizona Office of Tourism is requesting event information to be considered for the calendar of events posted at www.ArizonaGuide.com. The calendar is currently updated with events through March 2007. We would like to receive information for events that occur through June 2007 or beyond. Events to be considered must be open to the public and of interest to participants or spectators from neighboring communities across Arizona or from out of state. Submissions should include the date, including the year; community in which the event takes place, name of event; venue; venue address; description; admission, event time; phone number and/or Web site for the public to obtain additional information. Please include your contact information so that we may reach you with any questions we may have prior to posting your event. Photography to accompany any event

listing is encouraged, and we can supply you with an image information form. December 2006 events may also be submitted immediately if the event is not already posted. Please check the Web site to see if your event is already included. Information on 2007 events should be submitted by January 1, 2007. If you have questions or would like an event submission form, please contact Marjorie Magnusson at Mmagnusson@azot.gov or by phone at 602-364-3695 or fax at 602-364-3702.

Industry News

Finely Tailored Vacations

Travelers who want out-of-the-ordinary experiences often on short notice and are willing to pay for them, are fueling the "bespoke" travel business. These trips are to travel what couture is to fashion: tailor-made, costly and designed to make a lasting impression. "We have tax advisers, personal shoppers and hairdressers" who provide personal service, why not travel agents, asks Tom Costigan, director of bespoke travel for Butterfield & Robinson, a travel agency that focuses on biking and walking tours. Bespoke travel outfits typically start by quizzing clients about their interests and preferences, then craft itineraries that reflect them. The big agencies have a vast network of offices and "destination experts" they can draw on. Smaller firms rely on their intimate knowledge of a region and the relationships they've developed there. Either way, these connections allow the agents to offer experiences you don't get with packaged tours, says Business Week. (*Business Week.com*, 12/11)

Execs Share Ways to Make Foreign Visitors Feel More Welcome

Tourism industry executives, educators and other business leaders met Wednesday with top officials of the Bush administration in a first step toward changing the way foreign tourists are greeted when they arrive in the U.S. Industry leaders were hopeful that the first meeting of the Secure Borders and Open Doors Advisory Committee in Washington signals a renewed interest by the administration in proposals to help counter declining numbers of overseas visitors. The Departments of State and Homeland Security announced that Dr. Jared L. Cohen, president of Carnegie Mellon University, and John Chen, chairman, CEO and president of Sybase Inc., will serve as co-chairs of the committee. Other members of the 18-member panel include Roger Dow, president of the Travel Industry Association, J.W. Marriott, president and CEO of Marriott International, Jay Rasulo, chairman of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, and James May, president and CEO of the Air Transport Association. The committee will provide advice and recommendations to State and DHS officials on efforts to maintain security while improving the way the U.S. welcomes visitors from overseas. (*Orlando Sentinel.com/Business; Special to Travel Advance* 12/7)